



Nunawading High School

Photo courtesy of Jacques Calais.

Nunawading Adventist College

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Nunawading Christian College (NCC) is a Seventh-day Adventist school offering all grades of elementary and secondary education. It is located at 161 Central Road Nunawading, Victoria 3131, Australia. It is described as “a coeducational Christian school in Melbourne, located a short walk from Nunawading railway station. NCC provides a values-based education for students in Early Learning, Primary School, and Secondary School.”¹

Elementary Division

Nunawading Christian College in suburban Melbourne, Victoria, began as an elementary school in 1962. The Seventh-day Adventist elementary school in nearby Ringwood had closed in December 1961 and its students, together with extra children from the local area, formed the new classes on the Adventist campground at Nunawading. Temporary rooms were found for Kindergarten through Year 3 in what was known as the Literature Evangelist’s hut and Years 4 through 6 were accommodated in the Dorcas Welfare hut. Eleanor Thomson and Leonie Richardson taught the lower classes while Trevor Lloyd, principal, taught the upper classes. It was a humble beginning.²

By the opening of the new school year, February 1963, three permanent classrooms, an office, and amenities were completed. At the end of the previous year, the elementary division of nearby Hawthorn Seventh-day Adventist Central School was closed in anticipation of its pupils being absorbed into the classes at Nunawading. During 1963, the lower school was taught by Mary Burgoyne and the middle level by Alice Hardy. Lloyd remained as principal teaching the upper level. That year there were approximately ninety students enrolled.³ In the period 1964 through 1974, the successive principals were Arthur Pascoe, Geoffrey Jones, and Travis Garley.⁴

Secondary School Division

The secondary school began in 1974 with the addition of twenty-three students in Year 7 class. Classes were held under primitive conditions in the welfare hut and the youth hall on the campground. The library was among the pots and pans in the camp kitchen. However, buildings were completed so that each subsequent year another class could be offered. By 1976, eight teachers were engaged teaching 130 students in classes through Year 10. An official opening ceremony was held on February 27, 1977, to mark completion of stage one of the expansion program.⁵ Alwyn Campbell was principal of the secondary school during this early stage of development.⁶

The years 1977 through 1983 saw further buildings completed in order to accept an influx of students due to the closure of the Hawthorn Central School. Principals David Chesney and Brian Howell supervised this growth, followed by Roy Hollingsworth and Robert Wareham.⁷ In 1989, Peter Morey began a six-year term as principal during which the institution’s name changing from Nunawading Seventh-day Adventist High School to Nunawading Adventist College.⁸ Those who served as principals following Morey were Anthony Morgan (1994-

1996),⁹ Peter Lindsay (1997-1999),¹⁰ Robert Wareham (2000),¹¹ Stuart Barons (2001-2002),¹² Philip Knight (2003),¹³ and Jacques Calais (2004-2007).¹⁴

During the same time, the elementary division was successively administrated by principals Harold Fechner, Max Miller, Elwyn Heaton, Donald Walkom, Ruth Hills, Rosanne Stacey, Jean Mack, Lynette Denne, Lyndon Chapman, Peter Michalski, and Christopher Cowled.¹⁵

Development in the Twenty-First Century

An Early Learning Center has been added to the school facilities in 2015.¹⁶ Described as “an Education Victoria accredited Kindergarten program and long day care for Children aged three to five years old,”¹⁷ students regularly participate in activities with the primary school to make the step to school easier.

Among its innovative programs, Nunawading Christian College’s “School at Work” tours each month during term invite parents and friends to see classrooms and facilities in action by booking a personal tour and interview with the principal.¹⁸

In 2005, the identification “Adventist” was dropped from the name of the institution when it was renamed Nunawading Christian College. Subsequent principals of the academy level were Lyndon Chapman, Adrian Stiles, and Hanna Stekla.¹⁹ At times the elementary and academy levels were administered by one principal. Beginning in 2020 this organizational structure became permanent with the appointment of Meggan James.²⁰ Even though “Adventist” was removed from its name, the school continues to operate on Adventist principles of education and is based on the Adventist belief and value system. Its statement of purpose reads: “Our Purpose is, through excellence in education, to develop people of integrity and Christian character.”²¹ Its mission statement reads: “Our mission at Nunawading Christian College is to assist parents to provide their children with a quality-learning environment based on Christian values and beliefs. Our College staff strives to provide a safe learning environment that will empower, nurture, challenge and inspire students to learn and achieve their God-given potential.”²²

The statement of philosophy reads:

The educational activities of the College are designed to provide opportunities for all student to achieve their maximum development intellectually, spiritually, socially and physically.

The process of education involves the continued development of a set of values upon which all decisions depend. Christian Education seeks to enhance sensitivity to values that are in harmony with God’s will. The development of character and personality based upon a love for God, unselfish concern for others and personal self-respect, is basic to all curricular objectives. The concept that every child is a candidate for heaven and that education is a preparation not only for life in society today and the future but also for eternity, is implicit in the

total curriculum.

Seventh-day Adventists believe in the reality of God the Creator, and that humanity was created in God's image. We have fallen from His original perfection through sin. The ultimate aim of Christian Education is the restoration of the image of God in people through the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.

We believe that an understanding of the world and ourselves is enhanced by an acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as a measure of reality and truth. Education is a search for truth and therefore is guided not only by reason, but also by the revealed will of God in the Bible. We are endowed with intelligent powers of choice and are accountable to God in every aspect of life.²³

Government funding enabled the erection of a large hall and gymnasium in 2011. Other early twenty-first century improvements included outdoor sports facilities, a refurbished administration block, better roads and landscaping.²⁴ These developments were made possible by the discontinuance of use of the property as a campground making more land available for college expansion. Nunawading Christian College set the standard for quality for Adventist education in the inner suburbs of Melbourne.

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NOTES

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